

Inside Seven

OCTOBER 1999

CALTRANS DISTRICT 7 EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

THE COAST IS CLEAR ON PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY! Maintenance and Construction Crews Cut Colossal Landslides Down to Size

August 6, 1999 will be a glad day to remember for the dozens of Caltrans personnel who worked together on two of the most massive landslides in history on Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) in Malibu, thanks to the El Niño rainstorms of 1998. It was the day the project was complete and the contract accepted after a 16-month-long battle with Mother Nature and the removal of two major landslides, two precarious properties and stabilization of a huge slope where an entire hillside found a new home: flat on the pavement of Pacific Coast Highway.

Like most rainy seasons in Southern California, hillsides have been known to shift. Certainly, the Los Angeles area and Pacific Coast Highway in particular have historically figured in many a cleanup. And like every rainy season before, the diligent and unfailing Maintenance crews come out in force and do a first-rate cleanup of the mud, rocks and boulders; and things return to normal once again. But these landslides were bigger—much bigger.

It all began on March 7 and 8, 1998, when Mother Nature came calling with a vengeance and rainfall saturated the hills adjacent to the Pacific Ocean on the north side of PCH; so much so that they came tumbling down onto the highway. Over 60,000 cubic yards fell March 7 and another 40,000 came down in a second slide just south of Pena Creek on March 8. Dave Servaes, West

Region's Maintenance Regional Manager, along with Jim Hanson, Maintenance Area Superintendent and Dennis Cutting,

Supervisor of the Las Flores Maintenance Station, worked with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), assessed the situation and closed the highway between Las Flores Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a distance of about three miles. The CHP allowed residents with identification inside the closure limits, however they were not allowed into the slide areas.

Caltrans immediately hired a contractor, CalEx Engineering Company to performance the emergency repairs necessary to safely open the vital Los Angeles thoroughfare, used by over 71,000 vehicles per day. For the next three months, Maintenance personnel under the direction of Servaes worked, sometimes around the clock, to oversee the removal of over 100,000 cubic yards of slide material, all while being pounded by rainfall. And while they were hard at work cleaning up the huge mess, the hillside was again becoming saturated beyond its ability to hold water. Another slide was waiting to wreak havoc on PCH.

While Maintenance crews worked around the clock, Caltrans Design and Geologists began preparing a scoping document for slope stabilization. At

the same time the Geologists continuously monitored the slide area and performed site investigation. On June 19, the slope



Helping To Make 2000 a Very Good Year on Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) -- The Goodyear Blimp delivers a message about the new Caltrans PCH 24-Hour Information Hotline, 1-877-4-PCHINFO, at dusk over Malibu on September 3, the evening prior to the PCH Safety Expo. (See story, Page 2).

Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) Safety Expo

Effort Under Way To Make 2000 A Very Good Year For Safety On PCH



From left to right: Mel Araki, Binh Nguyen, Mark Morris, David Lau, Carl Perez, Assemblywoman Sheila Kuehl, Bob Sassaman and Trieu Nguyen at the Caltrans Pacific Coast Highway Safety Booth at the Santa Monica Pier parking lot.

In an effort to garner publicity for last Labor Day weekend's Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) Safety Expo, the Goodyear Blimp assisted Caltrans by transmitting an electronic message over the evening skies of Malibu, Los Angeles and Santa Monica on Friday night, September 3. Details concerning the jointly sponsored Safety Expo, as well as the new Caltrans PCH 24-hour Information Hotline (1-877-4-PCH-INFO) were advertised via the illuminated message sign to the masses below as the huge, beautiful blimp floated silently over the glassy waters of the Pacific shoreline. While the airship also flashed the new safety slogan: "Please Be Safe On PCH," Caltrans photographer Steve Devorkin flew alongside in a contracted helicopter photographing and videotaping the amazing light show. Sameer Haddadeen, Senior Transportation Engineer and PCH Safety Expo Project Manager, went along for the spectacular ride.

The Safety Expo was just the beginning of a year-long educational safety information campaign borne of a team brought

together as the PCH Safety Task Force, a brainchild of Assemblywoman Sheila Kuehl. The Task Force is comprised of representatives from Ms. Kuehl's office, as well as from various local agencies who jointly hosted the event. They included Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol

(CHP), the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the cities of Santa Monica, Los Angeles and Malibu. The famous highway was also recently designated an official Safety Corridor by the CHP Office of Traffic Safety, allowing funds specially earmarked for public education and safety outreach, and enhanced traffic enforcement – all in an effort to educate the public to "Please Be Safe on PCH," the Task Forces' safety slogan.

The September 4 and 5 Expo took place at five parking lot locations along the seaside highway. On September 4, safety information booths were set up from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Santa Monica Pier, Will Rogers State Beach, Zuma Beach and Topanga State Beach. On Sunday, September 5, the location was at Gladstone's Restaurant at Sunset Boulevard from 1 to 5 p.m. Staffing the Caltrans safety booths were employees from Traffic Investigations, Traffic Management Team, Design, Public Affairs, the Transportation Management Center, Construction and Maintenance. Supplied with safety brochures, fact sheets, maps

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Members of the Santa Monica Fire Department get the crowd's attention while performing a demonstration of the "jaws of life," and extract a volunteer from a previously crashed vehicle.

PCH Slide

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began to fail again and rocks were rolling onto PCH causing the temporary closure, once again, of the roadway, until June 21 when Caltrans built a 12-foot high, 500-foot long earth berm along north-bound PCH to contain the sloughing material.

On June 22, Caltrans crews were now assessing the possibility of yet a second landslide—a mammoth one. In order to avoid the possibility of a disastrous slide, Caltrans and City of Malibu quickly assessed the site and the highway was completely closed in both directions, and the oceanfront homes along the highway evacuated. “We had to avoid a potentially catastrophic situation,” said Hanson. The need for emergency work was immediately ascertained and a Director’s Order for a \$20 million emergency construction contract was executed. The Division of Construction has service contracts with consultant contract inspectors to staff emergency contracts, such as this one. So, what began as a cleanup operation for Maintenance crews turned into an emergency slope stabilization project for Construction comprised of: the demolition of two homes; the purchase of four properties; the excavation of slide material; the construction of two retaining walls, one at the top of the bluff and one at the toe; the removal of over 330,000 cubic yards of earth; the grading of the slope with four horizontal benches; erosion control; and planting and irrigation work – a project the likes of which most Caltrans workers had never seen before. Also included in the project was road repair work—all of this smack in the middle of El Niño.

Caltrans hired the contractor, Burns Pacific Construction Company, Inc., for the construction operation portion of the project, along with CalEx Engineering Company and John Byers, Inc., for design and technical support. And Caltrans Construction crews began mobilizing.

All four lanes of PCH were closed at Las Flores Canyon Road. Thousands of rocks and huge boulders were beginning



Visitors collect valuable Pacific Coast Highway safety information on their early morning visit to the Caltrans Safety Booth.

and handy giveaways such as children’s hard hats, antenna balls and other important safety information, Caltrans employees met and greeted the enthusiastic crowds.

A ten-story Los Angeles Fire Department fire ladder and a demonstration of the “jaws of life” by the Santa Monica Fire Department, extracting a volunteer from a previously crashed vehicle, made for impressive and dramatic demonstrations for the many visitors on Saturday, September 4 at the Santa Monica Pier. In addition, the Santa Monica Police Department’s motorcycles and police cars proved an interesting visual presentation, especially for the kids. At Will Rogers State Beach Caltrans was joined by the Los Angeles Police Department. The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department was stationed with Caltrans personnel at Zuma Beach. And located at Topanga State Beach were Caltrans employees and the California Highway Patrol.

“I am very happy to be a part of the PCH Safety Task Force,” said Haddadeen. “And I am excited about forming closer partnerships with the local agencies. Over the past year, we, members of the Task Force, have grown together, sharing

in our understanding of the issues on PCH, and together we have successfully identified and implemented team solutions to concerns of common interest.”

The PCH Safety Expo was a celebration of the joint successes, as well as individual contributions. Haddadeen added, “A celebration of our team spirit has molded us into a group that acts as a role model of true partnering and a testimony to the fact that when people work together as a team, they can achieve far greater results than anyone thought possible. I look forward to continuing to work with the Task Force to further improve safety on PCH, and to future safety events in order to get our message out to the public, which is to “Please Be Safe on PCH.”

Thanks to Assemblywoman Sheila Kuehl’s Office, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles Fire Department, the City of Malibu, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, the California Highway Patrol and the City of Santa Monica for their participation in this important event.

Added Haddadeen, “Special thanks to all the hard-working participants, including: Bill Gunn, Mark Morris, Roland

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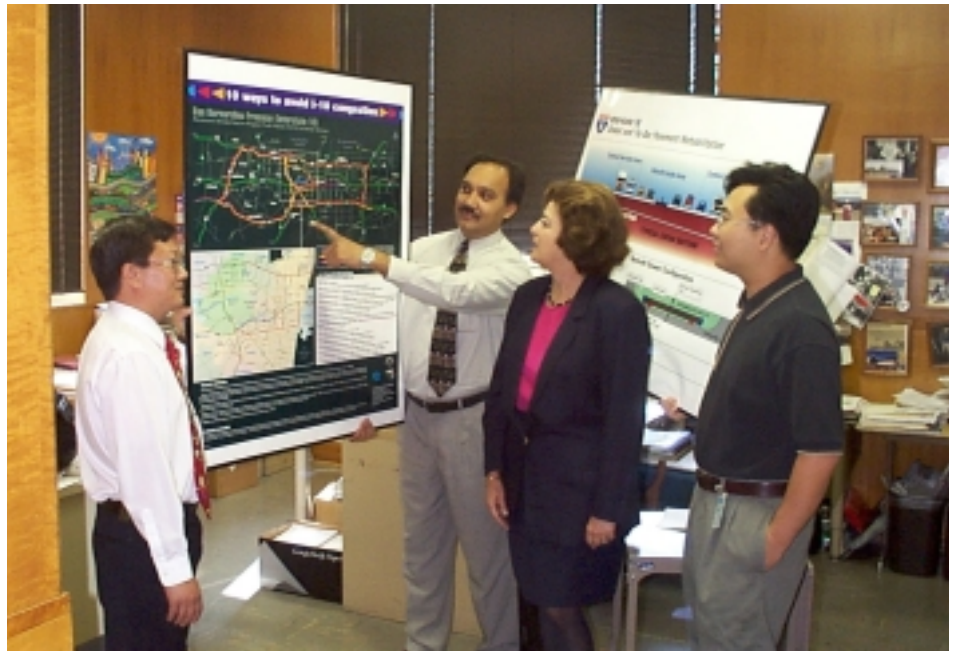


Watching Cement Dry: Media Coverage Gives Long-Life Pavement Project Life

When Pat Reid, a veteran Public Information Officer for Media Relations/Public Affairs was asked to organize a media event for a new, 75-foot-long, 70-ton, oddly shaped orange pavement tester in July, 1998, she had a feeling that this might not be an ordinary media event. The huge machine, named "Susie" would be testing the new, "Fast Setting Hydraulic Cement Concrete," or long-life pavement: a faster setting and longer lasting pavement which has the potential for revolutionizing pavement rehabilitation on California's freeways – and potentially the nation. Reid would take the lead in showing off the Department's new innovation to the public and to the media. She said, "That was just the beginning. Little did I know that those words, "Fast Setting Hydraulic Concrete" would become a mantra over the next year!"

Getting the media interested in covering a story can be challenging. So trying to get them excited about concrete was even more complex. But the capable and multi-talented Reid, who has been at this type of work for twenty years, knew just what to do and developed a media blitz of press releases, telephone calls and major networking. Her efforts garnered heavy press coverage. With the extensive media coverage "Susie" made a huge hit and everyone (including the news media) loved her, and also Caltrans' message about the new pavement rehabilitation efforts and construction methods. And "Susie" can still be seen working hard on the Antelope Valley Freeway near Palmdale (14) as she continues testing the innovative long-life pavement.

In August 1998, Reid once again found herself enthusiastically describing the benefits of the new concrete on KABC-TV (Channel 7) when the Route 60/71 Long-Life Pavement Project demonstration was covered by the news media. "It



Major players study the important detour map of the I-10 Long-Life Pavement project area. Left to right: Albert Yu, Traffic Investigations; J. P. Palaha, Project Manager; Pat Reid, Public Information Officer; and David Yan, Resident Engineer, Construction.

was fun and challenging to convince reporters to attend the a media event to "watch concrete dry." Mike Cicchese, a reporter from the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, said he was teased by coworkers when he told them he was going out to "observe pavement setting."

In March 1999, the focus switched to publicizing a \$15 million pavement rehab demonstration project on I-10 in Pomona. Reid took the lead on publicizing this important project to the public and to the media. What made this project so exciting is because it was the first time the new faster setting and longer lasting concrete would be used on a major freeway repaving project. And with the many closures expected over the next several months, including a long 55-hour weekend closure in October, it was vitally important to get the information publicized.

Reid poured herself into the project and conducted an extensive public outreach program she is still involved in today. Instead of just the usual press releases, a multi-element public awareness campaign was initiated consisting of

a myriad of components, such as: a special Web Site; press conferences; speaking at various community meetings including the Pomona City Hall, various city councils, advisory groups, community forums, and the California Trucking Association at the Ontario Airport Marriott; as well as several presentations at the California Highway Patrol's Transportation Information People (TIP) meetings. Said Reid, "As I got out into the local communities and talked to so many people, it amazed me how many opportunities opened up to market the project. The Automobile Club's public affairs staff offered to issue press releases about the closures and distribute 2,000 detour maps in their local offices." She added, "I'm proud of all of the colorful business cards I've received and new friends I've made in the past year as I have gone out to speak to the various Pomona Valley groups."

Reid received additional assistance from the District 8 Public Affairs staff who invited her to attend their monthly I-10 Public Advisory Forums where she made several presentations. She also met

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business people from Upland and spoke to a group at the Magnolia Park Recreation Center and Chambers of Commerce members in Ontario.

Also instrumental in the success of the public outreach campaign was Duncan McIntosh, Chief of Graphic Arts, who produced a detailed, colorful detour map and many informative fact sheets. "Duncan and his staff worked very hard getting this beautiful and informative map and other material produced for the project," said Reid.

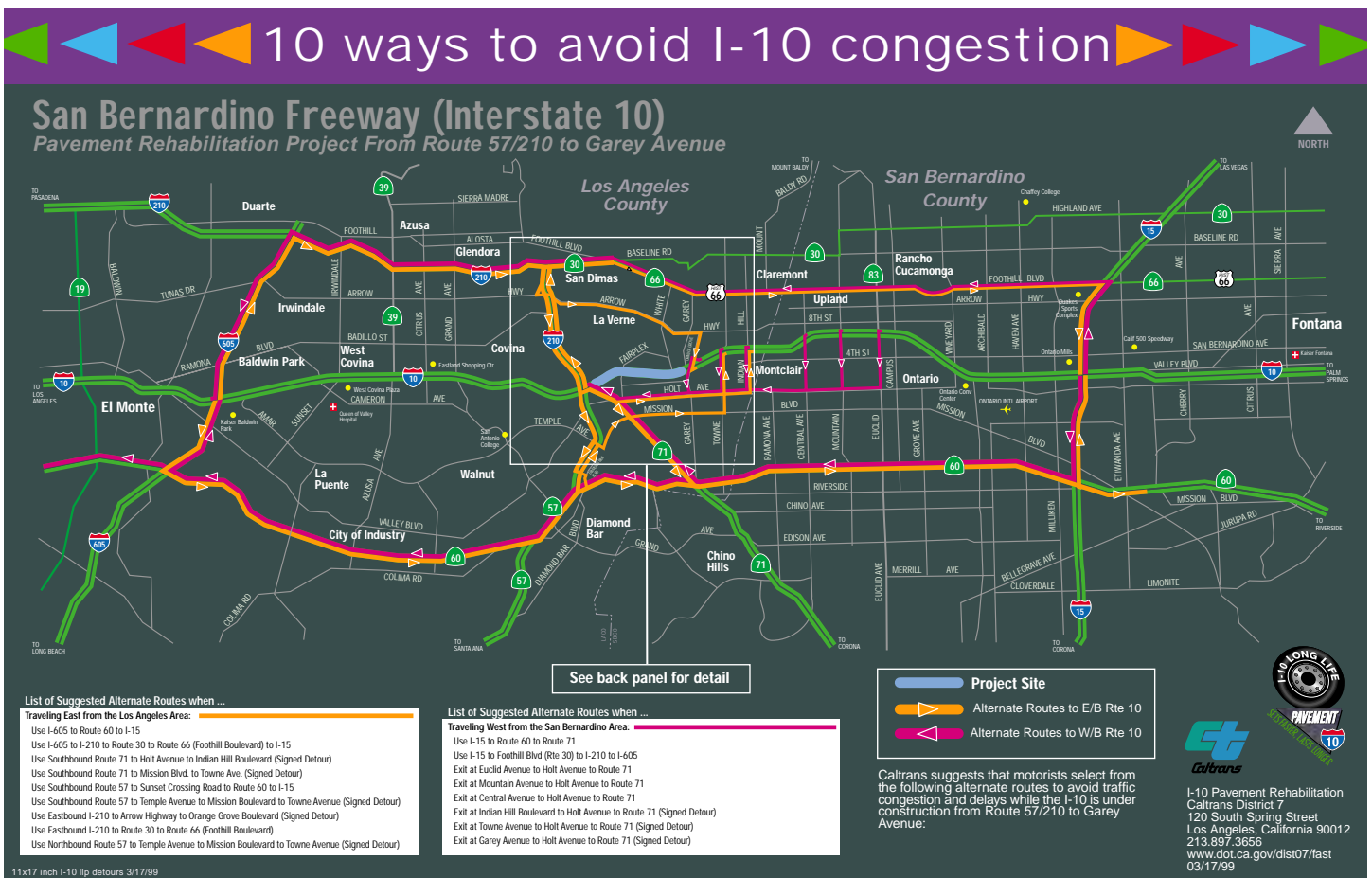
One of the most gratifying aspects of Reid's campaign was to witness the strong support and cooperation she received from Caltrans' many different partners in transportation. She said, "It surprised me that the majority of people I spoke to really understood the need for the construction lane closures, and they have accepted the message about the acute necessity to discover new methods for repairing our aging freeways." Several members of a meeting in Ontario

remarked about the importance of Caltrans' work, and truck drivers being partners and sharing information.

Other agencies are on board with the project as well. Metrolink will publish an article about the October extended closure in their October newsletter. The Pomona Valley Mining Company Restaurant generously offered to allow Caltrans to hold a press conference October 15 to publicize the long week-end closure and to display traffic messages on their large, electronic signboard. And Sid Robinson, Public Affairs Director of the Pomona Fairplex agreed to partner with Caltrans at the press conference and to encourage those visiting the Fairplex to plan ahead and take alternate routes. In addition, Chief Gomez of the California Highway Patrol will be addressing the media.

The numerous and complex efforts in waging a public outreach campaign take a great deal of ingenuity, know-how, expertise and experience. Reid is a 20-

year employee of Media Relations/Public Affairs who has a comprehensive background in the field of journalism and public relations. As a young girl and through her teens, she was the editor of every one of her school newspapers from junior high school through college. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in journalism from Syracuse University in New York and also attended the USC School of Journalism. And before her tenure at Caltrans, Reid spent ten years working as a feature writer and news reporter for the Christian Science Monitor, the Pomona Progress Bulletin and the Santa Monica Outlook; and she definitely knows what it takes to disseminate information to the media, hold press conferences and get a positive message out to the public. Reid added, "Ever since I was a young girl I always loved to write and I always knew that I wanted to be a journalist. And I am very proud to be doing the type of work that I love for Caltrans." ○



The important detour map of the I-10 Long-Life Pavement project area, showing ten ways to avoid congestion during construction closures.

Pacific Coast Highway Landslide: The Year in Pictures.



June 22, 1998: Ground Zero: First day of second major slide as CHP and Caltrans officials close the highway at PCH and Las Flores Canyon Road.



Seatrains being placed to hold back falling debris.



Workers below watch while crews above begin to cut the landslide down to size.



Before placement of seatrains, a colossal, wayward boulder ignores the sign and parks itself on the southside of PCH at one of the evacuated homes.



Workers push thousands of boulders and falling rocks off the highway.



Damaged seatrains show the force of falling rocks, a testament to the powerful forces of nature the crews were up against.



Grading work being performed during preliminary stages of project.

Pacific Coast Highway Landslide: The Year in Pictures.



The 20'-high, 225'-long upper retaining wall in progress.



November 9, 1998 - The highway is happily re-opened to motorists. Joining in the ceremony were, from left, Mayor Joanne House, City of Malibu; Assemblywoman Sheila Kuehl; unidentified man; Councilman Zev Yaroslowsky; Senator Brad Sherman; unidentified woman and Bob Sassaman.



"King Of The Hill." The only remaining home is saved by construction of the upper retaining wall, shown at completion.



El Nino's rain puddles reflect the construction of the lower retaining wall, showing the graded slope in background. The wall measured 10' high and 500' long at completion.



The remains of one of two homes unfortunately lost to the landslide on Sierks Way.



Caltrans and Pacific Coast Highway in the news.



August 24, 1999 - Scenic and beautiful, Pacific Coast Highway at the slide area three weeks after the highway was officially reopened to happy motorists below, where landscaping takes root and flowers bloom.

Traffic Picnic In Motion



Enjoying the feast, left to right: Soren Khouidl, Paul Speakman, Doug Richter (rear), Ray Archibald, Dan McLind, Bob Wallin (rear), Frank Quon, Mike Sarieh and Denis Katayama.

Elysian Park near Dodger Stadium was the site for the revival of the Division of Traffic Picnic. The last Traffic Picnic was held about seven years ago. The August 27 affair was sponsored by the generous managers who supported the picnic with donations and other efforts, and included: Frank Quon, Arian Abrishami, Ali Bamshad, Sharas Bangalore, Allen Chen, Tom Choe, Amaha Dimiru, Sam Esquenazi, Yunus Ghausi, Sameer Haddadeen, Ken Hatai, Dawn Helou, Ray Higa, Gary Kevorkian, Steve Leung, Sheik Moinuddin, Luu Nguyen, Hector Obeso, Kirk Patel, Pat Perovich, Afsaneh Razavi, Hassan Safari, Wah Shum, Jackie Tan, Warren Tham, Bob Wallin, Peter Wong, Lewis Yu and Fim Zabezhinsky. Also instrumental in the planning stages and execution of the special day were picnic committee members: Joyce Minzey, Permits; Marie Richter, Traffic Management; Dennis Katayama, Traffic Investigations; David Song, TMC Support; John Cook, Traffic Design; Maria Pasos, District Traffic Manager's Office; and Eva Gomez, ITS Development.

About 75 people turned out on a hot summer day to enjoy in the fried chicken, oriental dishes and a beautiful array of fresh fruit platters — enough for all to

enjoy. The hot weather made for a perfect day for a water-balloon game to run amuck. Instead of using them in a game they were intended for, the over zealous crowds started "using" them on each other and created a free-for-all water bal-

loon fun fight. What a great way to cool off and show your friends and co-workers how much you care! Also, a new Traffic tradition was launched with the award of the first Traffic Tug-O'-War trophy. The office of ITS Development was this year's winner.

Marie Richter said, "I have received so many favorable comments from people who attended, and they told those who couldn't make it what fun they missed." Joyce Minzey added, "This picnic was a coordinated effort by past committee members and new folks to help build morale and have a lot of fun at the same time. This is not going to be just a one-time thing; we are going to do it every year. And everyone at Caltrans is welcome!"

"A large part of the success of our picnic goes to a group of Student Assistants who really went out of their way to help us," added Richter. They included Erika Gallo, Josie Galaviz, Zoila Beltran and Odmery Barrios. Thanks to one and all for a super fun day! ○



The Tug-O'-War Champs, left to right: Barbara Letona and her friend Edgar Herrera; James Chen, son of Allen Chen; Patrick and Danielle Tan, Children of Jackie Tan; Jackie Tan; and Allen Chen.

PCH Slide

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to find their way onto the pavement below. Seatrains, or large cargo holders, were placed to form a debris wall to keep the dangerous rocks from injuring workers below or damaging cars or homes on the south side of the highway. These 40'X 8'X 8' containers were placed in the median of the highway creating a wall 16' high and 600' long. On the south side of the wall, two lanes of traffic were striped to utilize both southbound lanes for two-way traffic. On the other side, Burns Pacific loaded dump trucks and hauled material off to a dumpsite. When the force of the felled boulders began destroying the seatrains, steel reinforcement and k-rails helped to hold the falling debris in place on the north side of the roadway.

Scott McKenzie, Senior Resident Engineer for Construction, said, "Caltrans' first objectives were to eliminate the hazards of falling rocks reaching the roadway, and to provide a work area for Caltrans' employees and contractors." This was accomplished by opening two lanes on July 2 and reducing traffic to a single lane in each direction and placing all traffic in the southbound roadway; installing a sixteen-foot-high temporary wall adjacent to traffic; and allowing the contractor to work within the closed northbound roadway. From these closed lanes, the contractor loaded dump trucks with over 330,000 cubic yards of dirt and rock, 12 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to the monumental cleanup and slope repair projects, two homes were demolished and two retaining walls were constructed for slope stabilization. The walls saved one home atop the slope.

Jin Lee, the PCH Project Manager, and the one responsible for the successful completion of the contract, said it was the biggest slide he had ever seen. "This project was massive and required extensive teamwork and coordination between Caltrans, the local agencies, the contractor and the homeowners." Lee was instrumental in developing a mitigation plan for the homeowners impacted by the construction. "The number one pri-

ority was to safely re-open the highway," said Lee.

Servaes said, "The Las Flores slide was one of the many challenges faced by Jim Hansen and the crews in the Malibu/West Los Angeles area during El Nino. Commitment, good planning and innovation kept the road closures and delays to a minimum."

Traffic issues during the project were handled by Sameer Haddadeen, Senior Transportation Engineer, Office of Traffic Investigations, in coordination with Construction and Maintenance. Haddadeen's unit handled all closures, detours, signing, striping and bi-weekly delay studies (studying impact of the project on the movement of traffic). Haddadeen said, "In addition to the magnitude of the work involved in the project, my unit was inundated with hundreds of telephone calls and correspondence." Most calls and correspondence dealt with requests to create a reversible lane operation (a lane that can be reversed from northbound to southbound depending on traffic demand) by moving the seatrains closer to the slide to allow for an additional lane.

This option, however, was not implemented since the reduction in the workspace was deemed unsafe for workers, and would have also resulted in additional delays to the delivery of the project. Haddadeen said, "Public convenience is important; however safety is paramount and cannot be compromised." He added, "Special thanks, especially to Son Dao, Transportation Engineer and Don Shoho, Electrical Transportation Engineer, and the rest of my capable staff for the many, many hours they spent working on this challenging project."

After a monumental, cooperative, joint effort, the highway was fully opened November 9, 1998. Elected officials, Caltrans and members of the community were in attendance at a special ceremony. After some additional work, the contract was accepted August 9, 1999 – 17 months since Maintenance began cleaning up the first slide and 14 months since Construction began their extensive project.

"The keys to the success of the proj-

ect," according to McKenzie, "were the great working relationships between the Project Manager, Jin Lee, and the great Maintenance and Construction crews; and also the proactive attention given to the project by Media Relations Chief, Margie Tiritilli, who prepared dozens of press releases from June 19 through September 8 and disseminated the information to the media, elected officials and to the communities. Margie would take our daily and weekly updates and make them understandable to the public," said McKenzie. "Also instrumental were the open lines of communication with various government officials; the Home Owners Association; impacted property owners; affected business owners; and the choice of the construction contractor, Burns Pacific Construction Company, Inc." McKenzie, Tiritilli and Lee received Silver Accomplishment Awards for their outstanding team efforts. Cindy Quon, Chief, Program and Project Management, said, "This was not a routine project; it was especially challenging and required a tremendous level of technical expertise. We exceeded our expectations, both internally and externally. It was a great example of what teamwork can do."

"The Las Flores slide required many difficult decisions to be made on the spot, including trying to save a private residence and still allow for the safe flow of traffic on PCH. The magnitude of El Niño really brought out the best in our Maintenance people," added Servaes.

Great work, great teamwork and a desire to get the job done right, all added up to success for the Divisions of Construction, Maintenance, Design, Project Management and Media Relations. In addition, the following offices made significant contributions to the project: Legal, Governmental Affairs, Traffic Investigations, Traffic Signals, Hydraulics, Materials Investigations, Traffic Management Team, Right of Way Relocation, Right of Way Acquisition, Right of Way Appraisals, Claims, Headquarters Structure Design and Headquarters Erosion Control Unit.

Thanks to all for a tremendous job well done! ○



Equal Opportunity Corner

Is My Screensaver Offensive?

By Cathi McMahan, Equal Opportunity Officer

The Internet and e-mail make our workday go smoother, pump our productivity higher and help us manage out time better. Or do they? While the electronic communications revolution has certainly been a benefit to businesses big and small, it has also brought along with it a host of headaches. It's probably more common than not for some employees to play solitaire on their work computer and think it is okay or their right to do so. Employees may also plan their next vacation on the Internet or their child's birthday party. Unfortunately, there is another threat facing employers that may involve costly legal problems. What happens when an employee forwards a racist or sexually explicit e-mail joke to co-workers or has Playboy Bunnies on their screensaver? It leaves the employer open to claims of race discrimination and a sexually hostile work environment.

The Internet can be a wonderful resource for research, or buying and selling and informing. It's also an easy way for employees to waste time. As a matter of fact, it used to be that employers' biggest concern regarding workplace Internet access had to do with employees visiting on-line pornography websites and creating a sexually hostile environment for others. As more employers begin to utilize filtering software and more employees begin to realize how professionally

dangerous it is to view pornography on company time, new Internet obsessions have begun to take a foothold in the workplace, such as on-line shopping, vacation planning and on-line gambling. One in particular that has received a lot of attention recently is on-line stock trading.

Internet users should not send or receive any form of derogatory or harassing remarks including comments based on age, disability, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation. Similarly, no sexually oriented information or images should be sent, displayed or received. Employees should be careful when downloading screen savers and other images when arranging their desktops. What is not offensive to you may be offending someone else.

Not every company provides workplace Internet access to employees, but many do offer e-mail capabilities. This may pose an even greater threat to productivity and legal liability than the Internet. While e-mail facilitates communication with co-workers and customers, many practical and legal problems lurk there as well. For example, employees may spend a great deal of time responding to personal e-mail messages instead of returning important phone calls. In addition, due to the relatively informal nature of e-mail, employees may not take the time to consider whether forwarding a joke or picture may offend a co-worker. This could lead to claims of discrimination or a hostile environment.

Some employers have attempted to solve these potential problems by monitoring employees' e-mail use. Since the computer and e-mail systems employees use usually belong to the employer, many

courts have ruled that employers are well within their rights to keep tabs on employee e-mail without inviting liability for invasion of privacy.

E-mail should not be used to send obscene, harassing or discriminatory communications. Other types of e-mail should also be monitored such as chain letters. If you have friends that regularly send you inappropriate e-mail, you should ask them to stop. Remind them that your employer may be monitoring your e-mail, as well as his/her employer as well, and you would like to avoid any unnecessary problems.

Just remember that if you wouldn't show it or tell it to your child, you probably shouldn't share it with your co-workers. ○

PCH Safety Expo

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Givens, Carlos Gamboa, Dennis Cutting and Mike Furtos from Maintenance; Nayna Shah, and Lee Rennacker from Traffic Investigations; Sam Esquenazi, Carl Perez, Mel Daida, Rody Torchin, and Gary Young from the Traffic Management Team; Rick Holland and Ivy Estrada from Public Affairs; Edmond Matevosian and Ben Ghafgasi from Construction; David Lau from the Transportation Management Center (TMC); Trieu Nguyen and Kevin Lombard from TMC Support; Ben Nguyen, Cesar Hernandez, David Gonzales, Jorge Fuentes and Don Shoho from Traffic Design; Steve Devorkin, Rosa Madrid, Monica Murillo, and Rene Trujillo from Graphic Arts. Also, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Affairs; and Mel Araki and Son Dao of my staff, for their dedication and commitment to this effort. It is dedicated employees like all of the above who have earned our District recognition as an organization with foresight and commitment to serving the needs of the local communities."

Congratulations to all for great teamwork and a very successful event! ○

OBITUARIES

RICK COCHRAN

Rick Cochran, 57, a 38-year veteran of the Surveys Branch, suddenly passed away early September 2 in Camarillo after suffering a massive heart attack. He leaves behind many friends and a loving family. He will be missed by all. Sincere condolences to the Cochran family.

BETTY SWITZER

Betty Switzer, Toll Lieutenant on the Vincent Thomas Bridge, passed away last month after a three-year battle with cancer. Switzer was hired in March, 1978, and promoted to Toll Sergeant in December, 1980. Switzer was the first female Toll Sergeant in Southern California and was very dedicated to her work. She will be dearly missed. Our heartfelt condolences to the Switzer family.



The High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane project on the Antelope Valley Freeway (14) from Sand Canyon Road in Santa Clarita to Escondido Canyon Road in Acton, completed September 22 and is now officially open to carpoolers. Work began on this 11-mile, \$30 million project in 1996. Congratulations to the Office of Construction, the Mission Hills Construction field office, and Resident Engineer Frank Latham and his crews for a job well done!

The Caltrans booth at the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona was chosen as the Most Outstanding Use of a Multiple Space Area. Caltrans received a special Green Ribbon for their exceptional efforts at the Fair. The booth was set up by our Safety Office and staffed by Maintenance personnel. Congratulations to Safety and Maintenance for their outstanding representation of Caltrans! Watch for more on this in the November issue of Inside 7.

On Friday, September 24, work began on the removal of two 12,000-gallon, underground fuel tanks in the loading dock area of the District Office Building. Details on this major undertaking will be forthcoming in the November issue of Inside 7.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| October 14 | Governor's Office of Emergency Services quarterly meeting at Los Alamitos Airforce Reserve |
| October 15 | Press conference for I-10 Extended Weekend Closure at the Pomona Valley Mining Company Restaurant in Pomona, to warn motorists to take alternate routes during the upcoming extended weekend, (beginning October 22) 55-hour closure of the San Bernardino Freeway (10) in Pomona. The following lane and ramp closures noted below are part of Caltrans' \$15 million pilot project to rehabilitate a 3.3-mile stretch of I-10 from Route 57/210 Interchange to Garey Avenue, using new, fast-setting concrete paving techniques, or Long-Life Pavement. Expected completion date by early next year. |
| October 22-25 | From Friday, October 22 at 8 p.m., until Monday morning, October 25 at 5 a.m., a continuous 55-hour construction closure of the numbers three and four (outside) lanes of a three-mile section of the eastbound San Bernardino Freeway (I-10) from the Route 57/210 Interchange to Garey Avenue in Pomona. The numbers one and two lanes will remain open. The connector road from the southbound 210 to the eastbound 10 will be closed. The following ramps will be closed during the 55-hour weekend closure:
Campus Drive eastbound on-ramp
Fairplex Drive eastbound on-ramp and off-ramp
Dudley Street eastbound on-ramp and off-ramp
White Avenue eastbound off-ramp
Gary Avenue eastbound off-ramp |
| October/
November | Statewide Transportation Forum to be hosted by the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency is planned for late October or November. Tentative location is the Ronald Reagan Building. Maria Contreras-Sweet, Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary and José Medina, Caltrans Director, will co-chair the forum. |

Cultural Cuisine



FALL INTO SOUP

Autumn is a great time to rediscover soup!

UNITED STATES SENATE NAVY BEAN SOUP

It's true — this Navy Bean Soup is served in the U. S. Senate dining room.

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| 2 cups dry navy beans | 1 clove garlic, minced |
| 12 cups water | One-fourth cup parsley, minced |
| 1 meaty ham bone or 2-3 ham hocks | Hot water |
| One-half cup cooked mashed potatoes | Salt, to taste |
| 3 onions, minced | Freshly ground black pepper, to taste |
| 4 to 5 celery stalks, minced | Lemon slices for garnish (optional) |

Soak beans overnight in water. Add ham bone and simmer until beans start to become tender, about one hour. Mix in mashed potatoes until smooth. Add onions, celery, garlic and parsley and simmer until beans are soft, about one hour. Remove ham bone, then dice meat and return meat to soup. Thin with hot water, if necessary (soup should be thick). Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with lemon slices. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

HAMBURGER HAMLET'S ONION SOUP

One of the most popular onion soups in Los Angeles, according to the Los Angeles Times, this is one of those meal-in-one soups.

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| 3/4 cup unsalted butter | White pepper |
| 4 to 6 large onions, thinly sliced | 12 ounces Monterey Jack cheese |
| 8 cups beef broth | 1 teaspoon chicken stock base |
| French or sourdough bread, sliced 1" thick | Garlic Toast (optional) |

Melt butter in large kettle, add onions and sauté until transparent but not browned. Add beef broth and chicken stock base. Cover and simmer 2-3 hours. Remove from heat and refrigerate overnight or several hours. Discard chilled surface fat. Reheat and season to taste with white pepper. Slice cheese into 12 slices. Lightly toast 12 French or sourdough bread slices, and top each with one slice Jack cheese. Pour soup into individual ovenproof serving bowls and top with slice of bread and cheese. Run bowls under broiler just until cheese bubbles and is soft but now browned. Serve with garlic toast on the side.

ANDERSEN'S SPLIT PEA SOUP

From Andersen's Restaurant in Buellton, near the Danish community of Solvang, famous for their split pea soup.

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| 8 cups water | 1 small onion, chopped |
| 2 cups green split peas | One-fourth teaspoon thyme |
| 1 stalk celery, coarsely chopped | 1 large carrot, chopped |
| 1 bay leaf | Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste |

Combine water, peas, celery, carrot, onion, thyme, and bay leaf in large kettle. Add salt and pepper to taste. Boil vigorously for 20 minutes, then reduce heat, cover and simmer until split peas are tender. Press soup through a fine sieve or strainer and reheat to boiling point. Makes 8 servings.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Please send articles or ideas for Inside 7 to Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Affairs, via e-mail by the 5th of each month to be considered for publication. All submissions are due to Graphic Arts for typesetting no later than the 15th of each month. For further information, please call 7-3630.

Attention to employees:

Each month, a recipe from our readers will be featured in the new *CULTURAL CUISINE CORNER*. Send recipes you would like to share to Jeanne Bonfilio, via e-mail. A new recipe will be featured each month. If you would like to share any other information with readers about your culture, with your recipe, please send it along. Next month is Thanksgiving. Do you have any traditional favorites?



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